FRONTISPIECE.

And were we, gracious George, of gallant crew
And kill'd by ——— dangers ——— nothing else to do
But turn thy great dastardly to future Jove,
And seek for wonders in an Indian A——?

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With frantic ambition to the public view.
To shriek each furious Wife a Common Foe.
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1346.k.45

AN

EPISTLE

FROM

Mr. BANKS,

Voyager, Monster-hunter, and Amoroso,

TO

OBEREA, QU[illegible] OTAHEITE.

Tran[illegible] C. Esq.

Second Professor of the Otaheite, and of every other *unknown* Tongue.

Enriched with the finest Passages of the Queen's Letter to Mr. Banks.

The SECOND EDITION.

Printed at Batavia, for Jacobus Opano;
And sold in London, by *John Swan*, and *Thomas Axtell*,
[Price One Shilling.]

AN

EPISTLE

FROM

Mr. BANKS,

Voyage, Storekeeper, and Harpsich.

TO

Tasso, Esq.

Grecian Tragedians of the OTAHEITE, and of every other unknown Tongue.

Humbly shewing, that the Effigies of the Great Lizard of Mexico, &c.

The SECOND EDITION.

London: printed for J. Almon, (late J. Scott) opposite Burlington-House, in Piccadilly.
MDCCLXXV. [1775]
Price One Shilling.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Editor of the following Epiſtle is happy in having an opportunity of congratulating Mr. Banks on the *elegance* of his writings, and the *purity* of his ideas.—If ſome few liberties are taken in the poetical heightening of certain paſſages in his Epiſtle, our gallant Circum-navigator will excuſe the freedom, in favour of that friendſhip and eſteem with which the heart of the Writer is warmed, and that laudable partiality which an Hiſtorian generally feels for the Hero of his piece. If the language of *Otaheite* be, as it is repreſented by the Iriſh Tranſlator of *Oberea*'s Letter, one of the nobleſt in the Univerſe, the Editor begs leave to preſent his Countryman with a genuine *Bull*, by tranſcribing the following Authority, which he preſumes will be deemed a proof that the Engliſh is *more noble* than the *moſt noble*, even that of the newly-diſcovered Iſland in the Southern Pacific Ocean. And, to ſhew his learning is not inferior to that of his moſt erudite Antagoniſt, he gives the following Quotation from the learned Camden, as quoted by the word-building Bailey, of lexicographical memory.

Thus Camden ſaid of it in his time, " That though he would not " ſay the *Engliſh* tongue was as ſacred as the *Hebrew*, or as learned " as the *Greek*, yet that it was as *fluent* as the *Latin*, as *courteous* as " the *Spaniſh*, as *courtlike* as the *French*, and as *amorous* as the *Italian*; " ſo that being beautified and enriched out of other tongues, partly " by enfranchiſing and indenizoning foreign words, partly by im- " planting new ones with artful compoſition, our Tongue is as co- " pious, pithy, and ſignificative, as any other in *Europe*."

The

INTRODUCTION.

The preſent Editor, like the Dublin Quill Driver, is preparing a Grammar and Dictionary of the Otaheite tongue; the only queſtion is, who ſhall be the earlieſt candidate for the public favour. Doctor Hawkeſworth's ſize, price, and number of volumes, are likewiſe followed; but if the Work ſhould not ſell, as he has every reaſon to think it will not, he will ſtill have Doctor Goldſmith's conſolation of thinking, that "it will be read only by the judicious Few."

Grub-Street,
Dec. 20, 1773.

AN EPISTLE, &c.

NO, *Oberea!* No, thy faithful ſwain
Will ne'er embark in love's light ſkiff again:
Nor ſhall my olive beauty e'er have cauſe
To charge him with a breach of honour's laws;
No dainty maid of Europe (*a*) e'er ſhall prove
Thy fond *Opano* * faithleſs to his love:
Warm'd with thy charms, no other maid ſhall paſs
With me her evening on the bending graſs.
What tho' no bread-trees on our ſhores are found,
Daily we preſs the ſofa, or the ground,
Till, loſt in bliſs, 'tis all enchantment round.

NOTES.

(*a*) Though now ſome European maid you woo,
Of waiſt more taper, and of whiter hue;
Yet oft with me you deign'd the night to paſs,
Beneath yon bread-tree on the bending graſs.

* The people of Otaheite could not pronounce Mr. Banks's name, but called him *Opano*.

Well I remember when we fondly lay,
Diſdain'd the wind, and brav'd the briny ſpray.
I own my ſweet conductreſs in my queen,
Thro' the thick covert (c) to the gaudy green;
I own the plants thy love has given to me,——
But what a plant did I produce to thee!
Ah! didſt thou dwell on theſe politer ſhores,
Where dukes are cuckolds, maids of honour whores,
Of plants explor'd thou wouldſt diſdain to boaſt,
And live, and love, the univerſal toaſt;
No more to glades or coverts wouldſt repair,
But meet thy love at Court, and preſs him there.
Carv'd was thy name upon the bread-tree's rind (d)?
Thy face, thy ſoul, are ſculptur'd on my mind;
And, well I ween, bleſt produce of thy charms,
My image lives and prattles in thy arms.
Oh! plunge the infant in the briny lake,
And give him vigour for his father's ſake:
So ſhall, when years have well matur'd his ſize,
Numerous Opanos in thy country riſe;

THE

NOTES.

(c) Who led thee through the woods impervious ſhade,
Pierc'd the thick covert, and explor'd the glade;
Taught thee each plant that ſips the morning dew,
And brought the latent minerals to thy view?

(d) A bread-tree ſtands, on which with ſharpen'd ſtone,
To thy dear name I deign'd unite my own.

Till Otaheite bleſs the happy day,
When fav'ring gales, propitious to my way,
Conducted Britain's ſhips, with ſails unfurl'd,
To give new heroes to the ſouthern world.
I know thy ſenate (*e*) ſat in deep debate,
And laugh'd to think they doubted for the ſtate;
The gen'rous heroes of my native land,
Scorn to oppreſs e'en where they *can* command;
But the ſweet girls of Otaheite's ſhore
Charm ev'ry ſoul, and force us to adore.
Yet ſtill, I thank thee, gentle Queen of Love,
For fondneſs more than has the billing dove;
I thank thee, *Oberea*, that thy mind,
To peaceful arts and gentle thoughts inclin'd (*f*),
Gave us the hogs, the cocoa, and the bread,
The dainty dog, and the delicious bed.
The pangs of conſcious love (*g*) my fair one knew,
I feel with thanks the dear confeſſion true:

With-

NOTES.

(*e*) My faithful ſenate ſat in wiſe debate,
And weigh'd the dubious intereſts of the State.

(*f*) Yet I more ſoft to gentle peace inclin'd,
And ſooth'd the terrors of Tupia's mind.
Send them, I cry'd, twice twelve delicious dogs,
And give them cocoas, women, bread, and hogs.

(*g*) Then firſt the pangs of conſcious love I knew,
My eyes, my longing ſoul was fixt on you.
To gain thy love I practis'd every art,
And gave my kingdom as I gave my heart.

Without thy heart wouldſt thou thy kingdom give,
Thy fond *Opano* would not wiſh to live;
But curſt the hour, and doubly curſt his head,
The damn'd Obadee †, in the royal bed!
Well from thy temples (*b*) thou the hair mightſt twitch,
And prick in mere diſpair thy lovely breech.
But oh! the dance laſcivious on me ſtole,
Shook all my frame, while trembled to my ſoul
The naſal muſic.——Oh, my *Oberé*,
What in that moment felt I not for thee!
And were thy limbs (*i*) ſo brac'd by fierce deſire?
And were thoſe eyes enſhrin'd in wanton fire?
I know they were;--for, feeling all their flame,
I catch'd th' ecſtatic ſtroke that wants a name;
I, too, like thee, hung on the *lips of love*,
While warmeſt tranſports did our paſſion prove;

Tranſ-

NOTES.

† On the 29th, not very early in the forenoon, Mr. Banks went to pay his court to Oberea, and was told that ſhe was ſtill aſleep under the awning of her boat. Thither he went, and, upon looking into her chamber, he found her in bed with a handſome young fellow, about twenty-five, whoſe name was Obadee. *Hawkeſ. Voyages.*

(*b*) From my chaff'd temples ſtrait my locks I twitch,
And with the prickly ſhell *tataow* my breech.

(*i*) My eyes refulgent beam'd with wanton fire,
And all my limbs were brac'd by fierce deſire.
Not Hella's ſelf, with all her curious *pas*,
Her *rigadoons* and motley *entre-chas*,
With ſuch luxuriant grace diſplays her thigh,
Or * *temeredes* with ſuch eaſe, as I.

* The Temeredee is the laſcivious dance. *See Hawkeſworth's Voyages.*

It was not eaſy to find out who Oberea meant by Hella; but an ingenious friend and critic ſuggeſted to me that it muſt be Mademoiſelle Heinel, whoſe ſkill and fame we may ſuppoſe was highly exaggerated to Oberea, by Monſ. Bougainville.

Tranſports like thoſe our holy nuns enjoy,
While holier monks ſtrive for the future boy.
" Come here to kiſs me"——yes, at any æra,
I'll greet thee with a fond *meetee atira* (*k*).
No, my dear Queen, I'll not forget the night (*l*),
When, ſtarting from my ſleep in wild affright,
I call'd my Princeſs,—for I call'd on you,
" Oh! damn the breeches (*m*)! where is your *Perou* (*n*)?"
If other lovers languiſh to impart (*o*)
The forceful paſſion to thy feeling heart;
If thy arch'd eye-brow charm'd the fond *Teetee*,
And *Otapairoo* ſcratch'd his —— for thee;
What boots their mean endeavours to approve
Their perſons worthy of my Princeſs' love?

NOTES.

(*k*) *Meetee atira*† ſweetly you expreſt,
Your eyes all-eloquent explain'd the reſt.

(*l*) Say, fondeſt youth, canſt thou forget the night,
When, ſtarting from your ſleep in wild affright,

(*m*) Riſe *Oberea*, riſe my Queen, you ſaid,
Some thief has ſtol'n my breeches * from my head.

(*o*) Nor ſtrove not other ſuitors to impart,
A mutual paſſion to my royal heart;
My neck, my jetty eye-brows charm'd *Teetee*,
And *Otapairoo* pink'd his bum for me.

† " Come here to kiſs me"—See the Vocabulary of the Otaheite language, which may ſerve till my Dictionary is publiſhed.

* Upon their viſit to Tootahah, Mr. Banks thought himſelf fortunate in being placed by Oberea in her canoe. She *inſiſted* upon taking his cloaths into her cuſtody. Awaking about eleven, he found they were ſtolen, upon which he awakened Oberea, who ſtarting up, and hearing his complaint, ordered lights, and prepared in great haſte to recover what he had loſt. In the morning Oberea brought him ſome of her country cloaths.

(*n*) *Perou* ſignifies a petticoat in the Otaheite tongue.

What their attempts 'gainſt ſuch a thing as I,
In Britain born, and more than ſix feet high,
In body vig'rous, as of foul ſincere,
And charm'd alone when *Oberea*'s near?
The dainty doll (*p*) which pleas'd thy wanton heart
In this fam'd iſle is ſcarcely worth a ——;
Our children trifle with the painted prize,
Yet Hawkeſworth knew it pleas'd thy royal eyes;
For thy *Opano* told him all the tale,
And ev'ry trick on mountain or in dale.
Oh, my ſweet Queen! it wou'd have done thee good
To ſee on tiptoe how the Doctor ſtood;
How his old ſides commoſively were ſhook,
At ev'ry page of our infernal book;
How luſcious age enjoy'd the flame of youth,
And virtue's champion learnt to martyr truth.
But he is gone! and envy's ſelf ſhall ſay
A holy *requiem* o'er his ſad *morai*;
For, in the early period of his life,
To virtue wedded as his lawful wife,
He wrote each vice to infamy's fell gate,
And ſhew'd that virtue was *that* vice to hate.

But,

NOTES.

(*p*) I received her (*Oberea*) with ſuch marks of diſtinction, as I thought would gratify her moſt, and was not ſparing of my preſents, among which this *auguſt Perſonage* ſeemed particularly delighted with a child's doll. *Vol.* II. p. 106.

But, ah! in his enfeebled woe-worn years,
(A life firſt ſpent in virtue's ſacred cares)
A wretched tribe, who George's throne ſurround,
Damn'd to that curſe all virtue to confound,
And ev'ry vice to blaze in open day,
While ſhut the gate to wiſdom's radiant way,
With curſed gold, ſuch as thou ſaw'ſt me give,
Brib'd the good man to damn his ſoul--and live.
The fatal bribe he took; but, ah! his ſoul
Roſe high, and ſought the great empyreal goal:
That goal, I truſt, is gain'd; the mortal frame
Sunk down, and left the *ſhadow of a name:*
Yet bleſs'd that name to time's remoteſt end,
For he was virtue's *once*, and Britain's friend.
The God who ſunk him low, has rais'd him high
And giv'n him genuine empire in the ſky:
Thoſe heav'ns his ſtudious readers long have ſeen
Receiv'd their leader, ere I hail my Queen.
All hail! ſweet *Oberea*, queen of charms,
Whom oft I've claſp'd within my wanton arms!
Deſire was mutual, but the fault was mine;
For you, fond ſouls, who dwell beneath the line,
In mutual dalliance hold perpetual play,
The golden age repeating ev'ry day.

What's vice in us, in you is virtue clear,
Untaught in guilt, you cannot know to fear.
But wherefore ſtray I from the well-known ſcene (*q*),
Where dwells my goddeſs, *Otaheite*'s queen?
Permit me, charmer, one warm tear to ſhed,
For her who wept, and who in triumph bled (*r*):
I bluſh to mention *Oorattoa*'s (*s*) name,
And ſink beneath the weight of conſcious ſhame.
" Three ſcarlet robes!" three red-hot damns be ſought!
Oh! how the mem'ry pains my aching thought!
The gallant ſons of Britain's warlike land,
In curious crouds around the beauty ſtand,

While,

NOTES.

(*q*) Oft to my eyes the well-known ſcenes appear,
Which image all that paſt when thou wait near.

(*r*) Here † *Teropoa*, wretched widow ſtood,
And ting'd the ocean with her livid blood.
Thrice with the ſhark's ſharp tooth ſhe pierc'd her head,
Exclaim'd, ‡ *Tebai*, and in triumph bled.

(*s*) There to yon plaintain § *Oorattoa* came,
And paid juſt honours to *Opano*'s name.
Three ſcarlet robes her tall attendants bore,
And gently ſpread them on the winding ſhore.

† *Tibora*, *Tumaida*'s wife.

‡ An exclamation of grief, which ſignifies, *where is he!* Early in the morning on the 28th, a great number of women came down to the fort, and Teropoa being obſerved among them on the outſide of the gate, Mr. Banks went out and brought her in. He ſaw that the tears ſtood in her eyes, and as ſoon as ſhe entered they began to flow in great abundance. He enquired earneſtly the cauſe, but inſtead of anſwering, ſhe took from under her garment a ſhark's tooth, and ſtruck it ſix or ſeven times into her head with great force. *Vol.* II. p. 104.

§ Friday 12th of May was diſtinguiſhed by a viſit from ſome ladies. Having laid ſome pieces of cloth on the ground, the foremoſt of the women, who appeared to be the principal, and who was called Oorattoa, ſtepped upon them, and taking up her garments all round her to the waiſt, turned about three times with great compoſure and deliberation. When this was done ſhe dropped the veil, and ſtepping off the cloth, three pieces more were laid, and ſhe repeated the ceremony. The three laſt were laid, and the ceremony was repeated the ſame manner the third time. *Vol.* II. p. 125.

While, as she turns her painted bum* to view,
With fronts unblushing, in the public stew,
They search each crevice with a curious eye ‡,
To find *exotics* —— where they never lie.
O shame! were we, great George, thy gallant crew,
And had we —— damn it — nothing else to do,
But turn thy great design to filthy farce,
And search for wonders on an Indian's a——?
But then to print our tale! O curse the thought!
Curse those who sold,—a blush for those who bought.
Fine tales for misses!—charming table-talk!
Delightful too in each meandring walk,
Through Britain's ample plains!—The lustful squire
With ease may quench his unsubdu'd desire:—
One page of *Hawkesworth*, in the cool retreat,
Fires the bright maid with more than mortal heat;
She sinks at once into the lover's arms,
Nor deems it vice to prostitute her charms;
" I'll do," cries she, " what Queen's have done before;"
And sinks, *from principle*, a common whore.

NOTES.

* The part on which these ornaments are lavished is the breech; this in both sexes is covered with a deep black, above which arches are drawn one over another. These arches are their pride, and are shewn with great ostentation. *Hawkes. Voyages.*

‡ A young man near six feet high performed the rites of Venus with a little girl about eleven or twelve, before several of our people and a great number of the natives. Among the natives were several women of superior rank, particularly Oberea, who may properly be said to have assisted at the ceremony; for they gave instructions to the girl how to perform her part, which, young as she was, she did not seem much to stand in need of. *Vol.* II. p. 121.

Yes, juſtly, deareſt object of my flame,
You execrate (*t*) th' infernal *Gallic* name;
Help ME to curſe thoſe too, whoſe deeds approve
Themſelves unworthy of thy country's love; ——
Whoſe ſordid ſouls could baſely plant diſeaſe,
Where all was joy, and liberty, and eaſe.
And wouldſt thou wiſh, my fair, thyſelf a fly (*u*),
To buz around, and in my boſom die?
My gracious Queen, I thank thee——in one line
Oh let me ſay that I HAVE DIED on thine!
And wouldſt thou vegetate (*x*) a vernal ſtump?
No—claſp thy *tendrils* round my brawny rump,
Fair Queen, more honour'd, that you can deſpiſe
Thoſe ſordid games (*y*) in which our ruin lies;
More honour'd ſtill—all honour'd ſhall you be,
That you deteſt the lawyer and his fee;

That

NOTES.

(*t*) Curſt be the envious gales that wafted o'er
Thoſe floating wigwams to our peaceful ſhore;
With ſpecious gifts a crew infidious came,
And left us * *bitter pledges* of their flame.
'Till then was nature free and love ſincere,
Nor genrous paſſion quench'd by ſlaviſh fear,
No pining maiden knew the venom'd kiſs,
But all was genuine extacy and bliſs.

(*u*) Oft have I wiſh'd, for ſuch you love, that I
Were metamorphos'd to ſome curiou fly!
Beyond the main I'd ſpeed my eager way,
And buz around thee all the live-long day.

(*x*) Nor would I not be ſome ombrageous tree,
That ſhades thy grot, and vegetates for thee;
At thy approach I'd all my flowers expand,
And weave my wanton foliage round thy hand.

(*y*) Think not I covet what you riches call.

* I ſuppoſe this alludes to the introduction of the venereal diſeaſe among them by Monſ. Bougainville which they emphatically call *the Rottenneſs*. See *Hawkeſworth's Voyages*.

But above all,—and think it no reproach,
That you comtemn the lozenge and the coach (z).
That my Queen's dogs (a) were ſtew'd to nice ragout
I freely own—but ate for love of you;
For not a dog of all the carrion kind
Could make me to your charms a moment blind.
That on my table (b) thou haſt ſpread thy ſmocks,
That thou haſt pour'd thy *monoe* o'er my locks,
Glad I confeſs; nor ſhall my tongue be mute
To praiſe thy noſtrils, or thy bread-tree's fruit;
For ſweet that fruit, delicious that repaſt,
But ſweeter far thy muſic to the taſte.
I own me happy, could I, e'er I die,
Once feed on dogs fleſh,—ſo with thee I lie:
I wept at parting, true I did—you know it,
And now I weep that GEORGE employed a poet;
That poet, long immerſt in moral rhimes,
Has damn'd my riſing fame to future times,

And

(z) I * crave no jollatures of five hundred ſkins.
(a) With you, thrice dear *Oparo*, oft I lay,
Within the wigwam 'till the dawn of day;
Then from my pack, with anxious care, for you,
Choſe the beſt dog, and ſtew'd the nice ragout:
(b) To grace thy table ſpread my fineſt ſmocks,
And pour'd the fragrant † *monoe* o'er thy locks.
For thee each morn I cull'd the bread-tree's fruit,
And ‡ with my noſtrils blew the dulcet flute.
Thrice happy youth! what bliſs with thine could vie,
To feed on dog's fleſh, and with Queens to lie!

* It is ſurpriſing that Oberea ſhould be ſo well acquainted with the manners of Great Britain; but as ſhe appears to have had ſuch fine parts, we may eaſily imagine that ſhe did not fail to profit by her frequent converſation with Mr. Banks.

† The people of Otaheite have a cuſtom of anointing their heads with what they call monoe, which is an oil expreſſed from the cocoa nut.

‡ It appears that muſic is cultivated in Otaheite to no ſmall degree of perfection. Indeed, this method of blowing the flute with the noſtrils is admirably calculated for the *cromatic*. We have heard, with great pleaſure, that the ingenious Dr. Burney intends to take a voyage to the South Sea, to inform himſelf, and afterwards to give ſome account to the public, of the ſtate of muſic in thoſe parts.

And ſunk your botaniſt, whoſe utmoſt ſkill
Would fain have rival'd *Water-Dock* and *Hill*;
That Hill, my charmer, who, throughout the town,
Raiſes of drugs, and ſinks his own renown;
Who each diſorder's cure full ſoon makes out,
And droops himſelf beneath the painful gout.
Your dreams (c), my dear, deſpiſe; you only dread
Reflect on what vile ſtuff are dreams compos'd!

Forbid it, fate! and can my Queen believe,
That ſhe could die while *I* could make her live?
Ah, no! in death united we will lay
And ſtretch us mutual in the ſad *moraï*.

Thy copious tears, I truſt, ſhall ne'er deſcend
While the new plant is thy *Opano's* friend;
Where-e'er I go, and on what foreign ſhore,
Whatever myſteries my eyes explore,
Oh, never, never till my latest breath,
Till this fair form ſhall ſink in deepeſt death,
Will I forget my love! the brighteſt Queen
Who e'er was yet by navigators ſeen.
And, if propitious fortune aid my vow,
I'll ſoon preſent me where my ſoul is now:
Not ſighs alone I'll waft to thy dear ſhore,
But give one treaſure, to return no more:
So help me love, impaſſion'd love alone,
For my long abſence amply I'll attone,
And live, the *fond ſupport* of OTAHEITE'S THRONE!

OPANO.

(c) And e'en in dreams renew'd my anxious care.

FINIS.